REPORT

on the management of the fishing fleets in the Outermost Regions
(2016/2016(INI))

Committee on Fisheries

Rapporteur: Ulrike Rodust
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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the management of the fishing fleets in the Outermost Regions
(2016/2016(INI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which confers a special status on the outermost regions (ORs) and provides for the adoption of ‘specific measures’ enabling the full implementation of the Treaties and common policies,

– having regard to the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Communities in Joined Cases C-132/14 to C-136/14 on the interpretation of Article 349 TFEU, which stresses that Article 349 allows derogations not only from the treaties but also from secondary law,

– having regard to Articles 174 et seq. of the TFEU, which establish the objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion and specify the structural financial instruments to achieve this,

– having regard to Article 43 TFEU,


– having regard to Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, specifically Articles, 8, 11, 13, 41 and, in particular, Articles 70 to 73 thereof,

– having regard to Commission Regulation (EU) No 1388/2014 of 16 December 2014 declaring certain categories of aid to undertakings active in the production, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),


– having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 2015/531 of 24 November 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council by identifying the costs eligible for support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in order to improve hygiene, health, safety and working conditions of fishermen, protect and restore marine biodiversity and ecosystems, mitigate climate change and increase the energy efficiency of fishing vessels,
– having regard to the Commission communications on the ORs, and in particular the communication of 20 June 2012 entitled ‘The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2012)0287),

– having regard to its resolutions on the ORs, in particular its resolution of 26 February 2014 on optimising the potential of outermost regions by creating synergies between the Structural Funds and other European Union programmes¹,


– having regard to Council Decision (EU) 2015/238 of 10 February 2015 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of the Seychelles on access for fishing vessels flying the flag of the Seychelles to waters and marine biological resources of Mayotte, under the jurisdiction of the European Union,

– having regard to the first report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council, of 24 September 2010, on the impact of the POSEI reform of 2006 (COM(2010)0501),


– having regard to its resolutions of 12 April 2016 on innovation and diversification of small-scale coastal fishing in fisheries-dependent regions² and on common rules in respect of application of the external dimension of the CFP, including fisheries agreements³,

– having regard to its resolution of 4 February 2016 on the special situation of islands⁴,

– having regard to its resolution of 22 November 2012 on small-scale coastal fishing, artisanal fishing and the reform of the common fisheries policy⁵,

– having regard to its legislative resolution of 21 October 2008 on the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 639/2004 on the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions⁶ suggesting that the derogation applicable to the ORs be extended by a further three years, to 2011,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0133.
² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0109.
having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1207/2008 of 28 November 2008 amending Regulation (EC) No 639/2004 on the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions, granting a derogation applicable to the ORs for a further three years, to 2011,

having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 introducing a scheme to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, French Guiana and Réunion, and in particular Article 8 thereof, which provides that ‘by 31 December 2011, the Commission shall (...) report to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the implementation of the compensation, accompanied, where necessary, by legislative proposals’,

having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 639/2004 of 30 March 2004 on the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions,

having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing,

having regard to the joint Commission communication 49/2016 of 10 November 2016 entitled ‘International Ocean Governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans’,

having regard to the Court of Auditors Special Report No 11/2015 of 20 October 2015 entitled ‘Are the Fisheries Partnership Agreements well managed by the Commission?’,

having regard to the action plans of the outermost regions for the programming of European funds 2014-2020,

having regard to the joint contributions and technical and political documents of the Conference of Presidents of the Outermost Regions of the European Union, in particular the final declaration of the 21st conference of 22 and 23 September 2016,

having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,

having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Regional Development (A8-0138/2017),

A. whereas the geographical location of the Outermost Regions (ORs) in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean indicates that European Union territories are located across several sea basins and continents and that the ORs are neighbouring several third countries;

B. whereas in recent years fishing pressure has increased in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of some ORs, between the 100 and the 200 mile limits, and whereas the fishing in question is being carried out mostly by fleets that do not belong to the ORs concerned;

C. whereas the EU needs to assume responsibilities in the maritime realm of the ORs,
whereas their EEZs make up a large proportion of the EU’s total EEZ;

D. whereas the fisheries sectors in the ORs have to be seen against the background of a particular structural, social and economic situation (Article 349 TFEU), which requires specific and adapted consideration of common European policies;

E. whereas the fisheries sector has strengths and considerable potential for development;

F. whereas chlordecone marine pollution is specific to the Antilles and is having a significant impact on authorised fishing zones, as well as on the presence of invasive species;

G. whereas the remoteness of the ORs has been recognised and taken into account as a general principle within EU law, thus justifying and enabling the set-up of a compensation scheme for additional costs for fishery and aquaculture in the ORs;

H. whereas the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which were designed to tackle the problems and challenges of continental Europe, allow for a differentiated approach for the ORs, but can only provide a limited response to the specific characteristics of fisheries in the ORs;

I. whereas the ORs consider themselves unfairly treated and 'doubly penalised' by the CFP (having had no access to previous aid for fleet renewal and now facing the current prohibition on aid for renewal);

J. whereas important sectors of the fishing fleet in the ORs were until recently not regulated, or were not entered in the fleet register, and had therefore no access to the EMFF for modernisation;

K. whereas one of the objectives of the CFP is to promote fishing activities, taking into account socio-economic issues;

L. whereas the rules governing access to resources should favour local fleets and more selective types of fishing that are less destructive to stocks;

M. whereas, as a principle of good governance, the CFP seeks to ensure coherence between its internal and external dimensions;

N. whereas a sizeable level of illegal, unreported and unregulated ( IUU) fishing takes place in some of the EEZs of some ORs¹ and in the sea basins around others;

O. whereas the ORs are affected by some of the highest levels of unemployment in the EU (up to 60 % youth unemployment in some ORs);

P. whereas the EMFF among other things provides for support of producer organisations,

¹ ‘Research for PECH Committee – Management of the fishing fleet in the Outermost Regions’, European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies, Policy Department B (IP/B/PECH/IC/2016_100); the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) operational programme for France.
Q. whereas the EMFF considers the following ineligible: operations which increase the fishing capacity of a vessel, equipment which increases the ability of a vessel to find fish, and the construction of new fishing vessels or the importation of fishing vessels;

R. whereas the EMFF can, however, provide financial help for ships in order to improve energy efficiency, safety, on-board hygiene and the quality of fishery products, as well as working conditions;

S. whereas the EMFF supports innovation projects such as management and organisation systems;

Provisions for specificities and geographical conditions of the ORs

1. Considers that sustainable fishing, using traditional types of gear, is the basis for prosperous coastal communities and contributes to food security in the ORs; insists, in this context, on the need to involve local fisheries in achieving food security for local communities, as food security in the ORs is currently too dependent on imports;

2. Points out that the CFP and the EMFF, designed to tackle the problems and challenges of continental Europe, can only provide a limited response to the specific characteristics of fisheries in the ORs, that they cannot be uniformly applied to the challenges and specific characteristics of fisheries in the ORs, and that they must be allowed a degree of flexibility and pragmatism or be subject to derogations; calls, therefore, for the development of a strategy for each regional sea basin tailored to the specific situation of each of the outermost regions;

3. Stresses the presence in the ORs of a wide variety of small communities that are highly dependent on traditional, coastal and small-scale fishing and for which fishing is often the only livelihood;

4. Recalls that marine biological resources around the ORs should be especially protected and that particular attention should be paid to fishing; stresses, therefore, that only fishing vessels registered in OR ports should be allowed to fish in OR waters;

5. The OR seabed is a veritable living laboratory of biodiversity; stresses the importance of research and data collection in order to improve knowledge of the ocean; stresses the potential of the ORs to serve as veritable scientific portals in their respective environments, and calls on the respective Member States and on the Commission to strengthen support for relevant scientific research projects;

6. Stresses the need to maintain the balance between fishing capacity and opportunities in accordance with the precautionary principle and taking into account socio-economic realities; considers, nevertheless, that this cannot justify disinvestment in collecting data and improving scientific knowledge on marine ecosystems; calls for the distribution of quotas for some species to be revised (such as an increase in the bluefin tuna quota for the Azores) and for the opening up of catch opportunities for others (such as for the kitefin shark), on the basis of scientific studies and the strengthening of technical and
material capacity in relation to ecosystem assessment;

7. Points out that in some ORs the fishing fleets are below the capacity limits set by the CFP, owing in particular to the lack of access to financing;

8. Notes that, given the specific climatic difficulties of the ORs, fishermen in these regions have to cope with their vessels ageing more quickly, causing safety and efficiency problems and making the working conditions less attractive than on modern vessels;

9. Stresses the fact that in its 2016 report, the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF)\(^1\) could not assess the balance between fishing capacity and opportunities for all fleets operating in the ORs as a result of insufficient biological data; calls for more funds to be allocated, under the EMFF and other funds, for the acquisition of technical resources for ecosystem assessment by scientific institutes and universities; considers, in this regard, that it is vital for reliable data on the state of resources and practices in these overseas EEZs to be available and accessible;

10. Points out that OR coastal fishing fleets consist mainly of ageing vessels, resulting in difficulties as regards safety on board;

11. Regrets that the Commission failed to publish an implementation report on Regulation (EC) 639/2004 by the 30 June 2012 deadline; demands that the Commission provide further information about why the decision not to publish this report was taken;

12. Regrets the delay in the adoption of the EMFF and, as a consequence, in the approval of the EMFF Operational Programmes, leading to late implementation of supportive EMFF provisions, which has in turn resulted in serious financial difficulties for some undertakings in the ORs;

13. Welcomes the specific provisions for the ORs in the EMFF, such as compensation for additional costs (subsidised at 100 % by the EMFF) – which is higher than in the previous programming period, but still not enough for some ORs – and the 35 % increase in public aid intensity for other measures in OR areas;

14. Observes the difficulty, or even impossibility, for certain fishermen in the ORs to access credit and/or insurance for their vessels, causing safety problems and economic constraints for these fishermen;

15. Points out that in the ORs, small boats make up a large majority of registered vessels; stresses that in some ORs, small vessels are more than 40 years old, which poses real safety problems;

16. Stresses the economic multiplying effect of loans from the European Investment Bank and EU funds, particularly in the ORs;

\(^1\) Reports of the (STECF) – Assessment of balance indicators for key fleet segments and review of national reports on Member States’ efforts to achieve balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (STECF-16-18).
Making better use of possibilities provided under Article 349 of the Treaty and the CFP

17. Considers that a separate Advisory Council for the ORs, as provided for in the CFP, is a suitable platform for an essential exchange of knowledge and experience, and regrets, therefore, that the Advisory Council for the OR has still not been set up;

18. Calls for the full application of Article 349 TFEU in the European Union's policies, regulations, funds and programmes relating to fisheries, particularly in the EMFF, in order to respond to the specific difficulties encountered by the ORs;

19. Considers that CLLD is a promising approach and the respective Member State should make best use of the possibilities provided for in the EMFF to support this kind of local development in the ORs;

20. Points to the importance of setting up fisheries local action groups (FLAGs), which are recognised to be an important channel for support and for opportunities to diversify fishing activities;

21. Calls on the Commission when proposing legislative acts in respect of costs for hygiene, health and safety-related investments and investments related to working conditions, to facilitate a holistic and appropriately tailored approach;

22. Calls on the Commission when proposing legislative acts with regard to the criteria for calculation of additional costs resulting from the specific handicaps of ORs, to also consider the impact of climatic and geographical conditions and depredation;

23. Deplores the significant level of IUU fishing undertaken in the EEZ of certain ORs attributable to both domestic and foreign vessels, and in surrounding sea areas in the case of others; points out that, for the domestic part, such practices also result from local food supply issues; calls on the national authorities to step up the fight against IUU fishing;

24. Encourages, therefore, the introduction of active (e.g. surveillance) and passive measures, such as negotiations with OR neighbouring countries with which Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) have not yet been signed;

25. Calls on all parties involved to speed up the implementation of the EMFF and to use the opportunities it provides to invest heavily in fleet modernisation – improvements to safety, on-board hygiene, energy efficiency and quality of fishery products – as well as in fishing ports, landing sites and aquaculture, in order to generate new market outlets; calls as well for the compensation regime for additional costs to be applied in order to make the sector more viable;

26. Calls for genuine consideration to be given to the interests of ORs when fisheries agreements are concluded with third countries, including by laying down obligations to land catches in the ORs or to employ personnel from the ORs on vessels;

27. Stresses the need to carry out impact assessments for the ORs whenever they are affected by fisheries agreements concluded between the EU and third countries, in
accordance with the provisions of Article 349 TFEU;

28. Notes that a restructuring of the fishing sector in the ORs may be needed in order to ensure sustainable management of fish stocks, and that, if necessary, a reduction of the number of vessels should be considered;

29. Considers that in cases where capacity reduction is necessary under Article 22 of Regulation 1380/2013, preference should be given to keeping vessels according to the criteria specified in Article 17 of the same regulation;

30. Requests the Member States, when implementing the CFP provision on the allocation of fishing opportunities, to pay particular attention to traditional and artisanal fishing in the ORs, which contributes to the local economy and has a low impact on the environment;

31. Urges the Member States with ORs to take all appropriate measures and to continue with specific aid schemes such as special taxation models;

32. Considers that data collection on stocks and the assessment of the impact of small-scale vessels in the ORs have to be improved in order to reinforce the scientific basis for fishing opportunities in the ORs;

33. Recalls that the ORs are dependent on the fish stocks in their EEZs, which are biologically highly vulnerable; considers, particularly in this context, that data on fishing in the ORs should be among the priorities for data gathering;

34. Stresses that as aquaculture could yield new production possibilities and high-quality products, its potential should be better exploited in the ORs – with strong support from the European Union, given the very strong regional competition – and calls on the Commission to encourage and support aquaculture development projects;

35. Calls on the Member States and the ORs to make best use of the de-minimis and/or the block exemption rules provided for in Commission Regulation (EU) No 1388(2014)\(^1\);

36. Calls on the Member States to stimulate the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds, and to stress the synergies between the different funds in the ORs, in order to develop economic opportunities for all players in the blue economy; encourages, in particular, investment in projects that make fisheries jobs more attractive, projects that attract more young people and projects that introduce selective fishing methods and help to develop fisheries;

37. Advocates the establishment, as part of Horizon 2020, of research and development programmes in the area of fisheries that bring together the various economic and social operators, thus helping the development of new fishing technologies and methods able to boost the sector’s competitiveness and enhance its potential for economic growth and

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\(^1\) Commission Regulation (EU) No 1388(2014) of 16 December 2014 declaring certain categories of aid to undertakings active in the production, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the TFEU.
38. Recommends that the future CFP take full account of the specific features of the ORs and enable them to realise the strong economic, social and environmental potential created by the sustainable and rational development of the fisheries sector in the ORs; points out, in this context, the need to reconsider the basis for the fleet segmentation – aimed at securing an objective evaluation of the balance between fishing opportunities and fishing capacity of the ORs’ artisanal fleet, which uses highly selective fishing gear – by fostering the improvement of the fleet’s technical characteristics with precarious propulsion power and/or stability which might pose a risk to crew safety in adverse weather conditions, in line with the objective scientific criteria used in shipbuilding, without giving rise to an increase in unsustainable fishing activity;

39. Given that outlying regions are areas with extraordinary potential, considers it important to encourage investment, and to promote diversification and innovation, in the fisheries sector with a view to enhancing economic development;

40. Proposes that the aid intensity for engine replacement in the ORs be increased where scientific evidence indicates that climate conditions and climate change have a decisive negative impact on the ORs’ fleets;

41. Calls on the Commission to look into the possibility of establishing, as soon as possible, an instrument specifically dedicated to supporting fisheries in the ORs, along the lines of the POSEI scheme for agriculture, that would make it possible to properly exploit their fisheries potential; believes that consideration should be given to the possibility of bringing together in this specific instrument, in particular, the provisions of Articles 8 (State aid), Article 13(5) (Budgetary resources under shared management), Article 70 (Compensation regime), Article 71 (Calculation of the compensation), Article 72 (Compensation plan) and Article 73 (State aid for implementing compensation plans) of the existing EMFF;

42. Proposes that the capacities of certain segments of the fleets in the ORs be increased, provided that it has been scientifically demonstrated that the rate of exploitation of certain fisheries resources can be increased without compromising sustainable fishing objectives;

43. Notes that renovation and modernisation of the ORs artisan small-scale fleet, which uses highly selective fishing gear, may improve crew safety in adverse weather conditions, provided that this is done in keeping with scientific objective criteria for naval architecture and that it does not cause imbalance between fishing opportunities and fishing capacity;

44. Recommends creating better incentives under a future EMFF to encourage young people to work in the maritime economy, particularly by means of vocational training and by promoting measures that improve incomes, job security and the overall sustainable organisation of the maritime economy in the ORs;

45. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The ORs include nine EU regions, which are part of France (Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin), Portugal (Madeira and Azores) and Spain (Canary Islands).

With the exception of French Guiana these regions are islands and archipelagos. Several aspects distinguish these regions from other EU regions. Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union comprises the specific features of ORs. These include remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate, and economic dependence on a few products.

The situation in continental Europe with regard to fisheries does not reflect the situation in the ORs.

The ORs point out the necessity to modernize their fishing fleets (as a consequence of the perceived ‘double penalty’) and to introduce more flexibility of financing provisions to encourage investments aimed at renewing them. They see the late integration of the ORs into the CFP as the reason for specific problems the current fleets face. These include the small size of vessels, low capacity, and reduced autonomy of vessels at sea.

Additionally, detrimental climate effects let the fleets age more rapidly than in other EU regions. Most often the fishing fleets are in such an intolerable state of decay that it could endanger the safety of fishermen.

In the ORs’ opinion more modern fleets would allow for a diversification of fishing and fishing areas, increase energy efficiency of engines, help to meet EU safety and hygiene standards, and would improve the quality of fish.

With this initiative report the rapporteur wants to mainly account for the following questions:

- How can the ORs better use their fisheries resources?
- Do fleet management rules under the CFP sufficiently account for the specificities of the fishing sector in the ORs?
- Do the conditions in the OR justify a different approach for the management of fishing fleets?
- Is, and whether yes, how is the current policy framework incomplete or could be improved?

Based on the conditions in the ORs, the report outlines the possibilities and proposes feasible measures to improve the management of fishing fleets.

The report is supposed to focus on the management of the fishing fleets in the ORs and therefore cannot cover issues, which may affect fisheries in the ORs, but are not directly linked to questions related to the fleet management.
Moreover, the report does not go into detail of topics that do not fall under the competence of the Committee on Fisheries, such as the EU Cohesion Policy and its Common Provision Regulation, and issues related to transport, trade, and processing.

The rapporteur is aware of the challenges of a high level of unemployment in the ORs, low level of training possibilities in the fishing sector, and the low attractiveness (both as reason and consequence). The report can deal only indirectly with these issues.

Recreational fishing increases along with the tourism activity in the ORs and therefore its relative impact on fish stocks rises (especially in the OR’s limited coastal areas). The topic of recreational fishing in the ORs could be subject of future initiatives from the Committee on Fisheries.

**Approach taken by the rapporteur up to the draft report**

Initially a briefing note was commissioned from the European Parliament’s Policy Department B on „The management of fishing fleets in outermost regions”; this study was published in November 2016.

Two general exchanges of views took place in the Committee on Fisheries. In addition, the rapporteur drafted a working document which was presented and discussed in Committee.

The rapporteur was in close contact with different stakeholders and addressed the Members of European Parliament representing ORs. Moreover, the rapporteur organised and attended meetings with fishermen from the ORs in Brussels.

**Areas of actions**

**Comparison between ORs and with mainland**

Except of few large vessels mainly located in the Canary Islands, the fishing fleets in the ORs in their vast majority consist of small scale vessels less than 12m. Therefore, measures for the ORs have to be taken against this fact. Low levels of investments into the fishing fleets prevent efforts towards increasing levels of employment, attractiveness, skills and education of (potential) fishermen.

While small-scale vessels in the French ORs and the Azores are relatively younger than vessels in France and Portugal, vessels on the Canaries and Madeira are older than mainland vessels. The total number of fishing vessels has decreased in the last 10 years in all ORs, on the other hand the total engine power has increased for France and Portugal.

The ORs (apart from French Guiana) are surrounded by narrow shelf seas and characterised by a grand biological diversity. At the same time the different ORs face different (initial) situations. For example the level of development and administrative capacity strongly varies between the regions. This has to be taken into account when implementing the CFP.

The current CFP does not contain any derogation for the ORs to the general management rules, besides for Mayotte. However, it provides a differentiated approach for the ORs, such as no access for vessels not registered in OR ports up to 100 nautical miles until 31 December 2022.
Moreover, the capacity ceilings for the ORs are set on a fleet segment basis (Annex II of the CFP).

With the exception of all fleet segments in the Azores and Madeira and vessels less than 12m in Guadeloupe and Saint-Martin capacity limits have not been exploited up until now. In this context the question arises if the sectoral approach is advantageous for the ORs or if more flexibility would be more appropriate.

Due to decreasing stocks in the coastal areas diversification towards offshore areas and species has taken place. Responsible offshore activities require a higher sea-worthiness and adaptations to the engines.

**State of stocks and biological data**

The MS have to provide annual reports on the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities. However, due to the lack of biological data as well as data for small-scale fleets the analysis is not conclusive for the ORs.

Only a small percentage of balance indicators are available for OR’s fleet segments. Of which, especially biological indicators are missing.

This is why the rapporteur considers it of outmost importance to further promote data collection programmes in the ORs. This is of even more significance when one bears in mind the ORs’ request for the renewal and modernisation of vessels.

**Financial support from the EMFF – Possibilities and hurdles to take**

The EMFF provides for derogations for the ORs. In addition, it includes provisions which against the background of the characteristics of the current fleet of the ORs are of particular relevance. Due to the late approval EMFF and consequently in the approval of EMFF of the operational programmes (OPs) support has been interrupted and temporary solutions, such as interim allowances, had to be found.

Under the EMFF the compensation scheme for additional costs incurred by the ORs has been broadened in comparison to the former programming period. The financial envelope has augmented for each MS and has increased from 15.6 to 27.5 million Euro in total.

Annex I of the EMFF specifies that operations located in the ORs may benefit from an increase by 35 percentage points, i.e. additional percentage points of public aid intensity.

Article 41 lists provisions with respect to energy efficiency and mitigation of climate change. The support for the replacement or modernisation of main or ancillary engines is conditioned on a balance of fishing capacity and opportunities, whereby the small-scale coastal fishing sector shall be prioritised.

It is proposed to allow for an increased aid intensity for the replacement of main or ancillary engines in the ORs to take account of the ORs specific climate conditions.

**Community-led local development (CLLD)**
The rapporteur considers CLLD a good instrument for structural and financial support. CLLD stems from the idea to bring together public, private and civil actors to promote local fisheries areas – e.g. it could induce the generation of high quality products via the professionalization of the sector (also upstream and downstream) and develop infrastructure to enable landings. Fisheries local action groups (FLAGS) are supported by the EMFF and other funds. Aid for CLLD may add up to 50-100%.

Up until now this facility has only been utilised to a small extent. The current operational programme (OP) of France does not specify if FLAGS are foreseen in the French ORs. The Portuguese OP does not state if FLAGS are envisaged for Madeira. Three Flags are contemplated for the Azores, none for the Canaries. In the ORs aquaculture is little developed but has potential when e.g. local companies specialise in local species for the export market.

**Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA)**

Currently, no SFPA is concluded with a third country in the Western Central Atlantic which would affect French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Saint Martin, and Martinique.

The existence of migratory species, the prevalence of IUU fishing, and potential positive indirect impacts of SFPA on local industries (up- and downstream) and respective evaluations of existing SFPA suggest that the conclusion of new SFPA with adjacent Third countries would be advantageous for the ORs’ fishing fleets.

Thereby, the rapporteur asks the Commission to keep a close eye on the coherence between the internal and external dimension of the CFP. In the case of Mayotte a specific agreement is in place, the EU-Seychelles access agreement. It concerns the access of Seychelles flagged vessels to Mayotte waters. The payments of the Seychelles vessels is intended for the development of capacities in Mayotte. France is responsible for the management and distribution of the payments. It has to report to the Commission once per year. The rapporteur wants to stress the importance of an efficient and quick provision of payments to Mayotte by France.

**Recommendations and conclusions**

The main object and prime reason for this report is the ORs’ call for possibilities to renew and modernise their fleets. They argue that the peculiarities of the ORs justify a renewal and modernisation of the fleets.

Safety or rather the lack of safety on board is a predominant problem in the ORs.

Financing exists on EU level and the EMFF factors in the specific conditions in the ORs. In comparison to the mainland ORs receive +35%, exceptional for engine replacement.

The delayed approval of MS’ OPs has entailed severe problems for projects in the transitory period. Nevertheless, the ORs will still have the possibility to utilise the advantages of increased public aid intensity and the compensation schemes.

With regard to engine replacement, i.e. modernisation, the rapporteur suggests support for means which help counteract proven negative climate impacts on vessels under a potential
future CFP.

The rapporteur is also convinced that more effort in the framework of CLLD could help to restructure the sector and supply and set up needed port facilities. She also notes that modernisation could lead to an increased and better diversification of fishing activities.

Whatever means will be suggested in the future they should guarantee sustainable fishing and healthy fish stocks.

Every possible effort should be made that the fisheries sectors in the ORs do not feel disadvantaged.
7.3.2017

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the management of fishing fleets in the outermost regions
(2016/2016(INI))

Rapporteur: Esteban González Pons

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

A. whereas the specific characteristics of the outermost regions (ORs) are taken into account in Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, under which specific measures may be taken in those regions as part of common policies such as fisheries policy;

B. whereas Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) recognises the specific features of the ORs and allows for a differentiated approach in those regions;

C. whereas the fishing fleet based in the ORs is chiefly made up of older boats of less than 12 metres in length that did not previously benefit from aid for vessel modernisation, and whereas this poses a risk to vessel safety and affects on-board working conditions;

D. whereas in the ORs the economic crisis has been felt particularly strongly, and their fisheries sectors have to be seen against the background of particular structural, social and economic situations;

E. whereas the delay in the adoption of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) regulation and in the approval of EMFF Operational Programmes and, consequently, the late implementation of supportive EMFF provisions have resulted in serious financial difficulties for some undertakings in the ORs;

1. Notes the general provisions laid down in Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund as regards aid for vessel improvement, but regrets that no
specific measures are established in that regulation that take account of the specific characteristics and condition of fleets in the territories concerned;

2. Observes the difficulties or even impossibility confronting some fishermen in the ORs in terms of being able to access credit and/or insurance for their vessels;

3. Calls on the Commission, with a view to the next multiannual financial framework, to consider the introduction of aid for the gradual renovation of small-scale fleets in the ORs in order to improve safety and efficiency, as long as that does not lead to an increase in the fishing capacity of those fleets and does not undermine the budget or the sustainability of stocks;

4. Calls on the Commission, when proposing delegated acts with regard to the criteria for calculation of additional costs resulting from the specific handicaps of the ORs, also to consider the impact of climatic and geographical conditions;

5. Proposes increasing aid intensity for engine replacement in the ORs where scientific evidence indicates that climate conditions and climate change have a decisive negative impact on those regions’ fleets;

6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, with a view to the development of the local fishing industries in the ORs, to promote the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds and synergies between all the funds that are part of the common strategic framework and other relevant instruments and European policies, in keeping with the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

7. Calls for continued efforts to be made to simplify EU legislation so as to provide easier access to Union funding for fleets in the ORs;

8. Recommends that the future Common Fisheries Policy take full account of the specific features of the outermost regions and enable them to realise the strong economic, social and environmental potential created by the rational development of their fisheries sectors;

9. Proposes, therefore, the establishment of a specific fund for fisheries in the ORs after 2020, to be based on the model of the Programme of Options Specifically Relating to Remoteness and Insularity (POSEI), which has demonstrated its effectiveness in supporting agriculture in those regions; recommends, in particular, that such a fund should, in compliance with the objectives of sustainable fisheries and healthy stocks, allow aid for the renewal of the fleet in those regions, including artisanal and traditional fishing vessels that land their catches in their ports.
# RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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**Members present for the final vote**

**Substitutes present for the final vote**
Jean-Paul Denanot, Anneli Jääätteenmäki, Louis Michel, Andrey Novakov, Tomáš Zdechovský

**Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote**
Inés Ayala Sender, Olle Ludvigsson, Ulrike Rodust, Birgit Sippel
### FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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<td>Ulrike Rodust</td>
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**Key to symbols:**

+ : in favour
- : against
0 : abstention
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the management of the fishing fleets in the outermost regions (2016/2016(INI))

Rapporteur: Younous Omarjee

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Having regard to Articles 3, 38, 43 and 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU);
2. Whereas, despite the constraints which are specific to the outermost regions (ORs), as set out in Article 349 TFEU, the fisheries sector has strengths and considerable potential for development;
3. Whereas the ORs are characterised in particular by an under-exploitation of fisheries resources and by fleets mainly comprising boats which are old and small;
4. Points out that the exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of the ORs cover 2,507,537 km², an area equivalent to that covered by of all the EU’s continental EEZs;
5. Points out that the remoteness of the ORs has been recognised and taken into account as a general principle within EU law, thus justifying and enabling the set-up of a compensation scheme for additional costs for fishery and aquaculture in the ORs;
6. Stresses that supporting sustainable fisheries in the ORs is crucial for ensuring economic, social and environmental development in these regions and for the optimal development of their potential; emphasises, in addition, that fisheries in ORs is a sector which creates large numbers of jobs and helps local people to earn a living, making communities more prosperous and resilient; calls for everything possible to be done to strengthen the fisheries sector as a pillar for local development in these regions, in
particular by supporting the creation and consolidation of fisheries in the ORs and by fostering local markets, including in the supply chain of fisheries products;

7. Stresses the link between food security and establishing sustainable fisheries in the ORs; insists, in this context, on the need to involve local fisheries in achieving the aim of food security for local communities, as food security in the ORs is currently too dependent on imports;

8. Recognises that European rules governing this sector are complex and that the obstacles they impose, including in terms of competition law, can hold back the creation and development of fisheries; calls for simplification or modification of those rules as part of future revisions, in order to make it easier for individuals working in ORs to organise themselves into fisheries collectives to have access to funds, to maximise the performance of EU funding and to make the best possible use of fisheries assets in these regions and create economic activities complementary to work in the industry itself, whilst keeping up the fight against fraud and making sustainable use of fisheries assets in these regions;

9. Points out that the common fisheries policy (CFP) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), designed to tackle the problems and challenges of continental Europe, can only provide a limited response to the specific characteristics of fisheries in the ORs, that they cannot be uniformly applied to the challenges and specific characteristics of fisheries in the ORs and that they must be allowed a degree of flexibility and pragmatism or be subject to derogations; calls also for the development of a strategy for each regional sea basin tailored to the specific situation of each OR;

10. Calls for the European Union, while strictly complying with the principles of sustainability and sustainable development established under the CFP, to exploit the exceptional fishing potential of the ORs;

11. Calls for Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) to be applied uniformly and in full to the EU policies, rules, funds and programmes related to EU fisheries policy, and in particular the EMFF;

12. Considers it essential to establish specific rules for OR fleets;

13. Notes that, given the specific features of the ORs, in particular climate difficulties, fishermen in these regions have to cope with their vessels ageing more quickly, causing safety and efficiency problems and making the working conditions less attractive than on modern vessels; considers, therefore, that the current obstacles should be removed in order better to respond to the specific characteristics of the ORs, by authorising the replacement and modernisation of the traditional or small-scale fleets – including the shrimp-fishing fleet – that land all their catches in ports in the ORs and contribute to the sustainable local development of fisheries in the ORs, supporting the labour market derived therefrom, in compliance with the EU’s international obligations and, in particular, the requirement not to grant state aid which could lead to overfishing; emphasises the importance of small-scale fisheries for local labour markets and the potential of EMFF for bottom-up approaches in coastal areas in particular;
14. Calls on the Commission to look into the possibility of establishing, in the next multiannual financial framework, an instrument specifically dedicated to supporting fisheries in the ORs, along the lines of the POSEI scheme for agriculture in the ORs, that would make it possible to properly exploit the exceptional fisheries potential of the ORs;

15. Notes with concern that the socio-economic consequences of this situation are particularly serious in the ORs, which are already suffering high levels of unemployment (24.6% in Réunion, with a youth unemployment rate of 52.4%) and that the low level of investments into the fishing fleets prevents efforts towards increasing levels of employment, attractiveness, skills and training of (potential) fishermen;

16. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the local authorities to determine and encourage the use of the EU cohesion funds, in particular the ERDF, the EAFRD, the EMFF or the ESF, in order to boost investment in the infrastructure required for the development of local fisheries in the ORs; encourages, in particular, investment in projects that make fisheries jobs more attractive, in training, and in projects that attract more young people and help them enter the industry, in addition to innovative projects that make fisheries more sustainable, promote selective fishing methods and help to develop environmentally responsible fisheries by creating synergies between the Structural Funds and other EU programmes;

17. Calls on the Commission to facilitate access for fisheries stakeholders and sectors in the ORs to all possible European financial instruments; calls on the Commission to take greater account of the strategic location of the ORs, and the role they can play in ensuring that seas, oceans and coastal areas are used in a sustainable way, as well as in global maritime governance and the development of a knowledge economy based on the sea;

18. Deplores the fact that it is only since the 1990s that the ORs have received support for the modernisation of their fleets and increases in their fishing capacity, and that the lack of consistency between the internal and external aspects of European fisheries policies is such as to seriously hinder the development of this sector in the ORs, standing in the way of the possibility of mitigating ‘double punishment’; stresses, in particular, the need to carry out impact assessments for the ORs and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), whenever they are affected by fisheries and trade agreements; calls on the Commission to better coordinate its trade policy with the other sectoral policies of the Union, in particular the CFP; calls for genuine consideration to be given to the interests of ORs when agreements are concluded, including obligations to land catches in the ORs or to employ personnel from the ORs on vessels; calls on the Commission to ensure that local stakeholders are at the heart of the decision making process when it comes to fishing fleets in the ORs; believes in the importance of ensuring that fishermen in the ORs have access to information which explains how they can make use of the existing support that the EU provides;

19. Calls on the Union to prioritise in its international action the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which hinders a sound and sustainable development of the fisheries sector, including in the negotiation of economic, trade and
fisheries agreements, and to provide for specific measures for tackling IUU in the EEZs of the ORs;

20. Recommends taking into account the impact of the financial crisis and its serious economic repercussions, which hamper the full exploitation of the specific scheme for the modernisation of the OR fleets (Regulation (EC) No 639/2004);

21. Points out that the ORs are dependent on the fish stocks in their EEZs, which are biologically highly vulnerable, and takes the view, therefore, that sensitive OR zones need to be properly and effectively protected, in particular by granting exclusive access to local fleets which use environment-friendly fishing equipment, thereby reducing the adverse impact of IUU fishing on the zones; considers, in this regard, that it is vital for reliable data on the state of stocks and practices in these overseas EEZs to be available and accessible;

22. Regrets that the Commission failed to publish an implementation report on Regulation (EC) 639/2004 by the 30 June 2012 deadline; believes that this is a lost opportunity, as this publication would have been a crucial source of insight for possible future derogations of the CFP’s entry-exit management scheme which could assist the development of fishing fleets in the ORs; demands that the Commission give further information about why the decision not to publish this report was taken.
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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|                     | 0: 1    |
| Members present for the final vote | Pascal Arimont, Franc Bogovič, Victor Boştinaru, Rosa D’Amato, Michela Giuffrida, Krzysztof Hetman, Constanze Krehl, Jens Nilsson, Andrey Novakov, Younous Omarjee, Mirosław Piotrowski, Stanislav Polčák, Terry Reintke, Liliana Rodrigues, Monika Smolková, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Matthijs van Miltenburg, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Joachim Zeller |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Petras Auštrevičius, Andor Deli, Maurice Ponga, Bronis Ropė, Branislav Škripek, Hannu Takkula, Julie Ward |
| Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote | Sofia Ribeiro |
### INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

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| **Members present for the final vote** | Marco Affronte, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Renata Briano, Alain Cadec, David Coburn, Richard Corbett, Diane Dodds, Linnéa Engström, João Ferreira, Mike Hookem, Ian Hudghton, Carlos Iturgaiz, Werner Kuhn, António Marinho e Pinto, Gabriel Mato, Norica Nicolai, Ulrike Rodust, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Ricardo Serrão Santos, Isabelle Thomas, Ruža Tomašić, Peter van Dalen, Jarosław Wałęsa |
| **Substitutes present for the final vote** | Norbert Erdős, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar |
| **Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote** | Josu Juaristi Abaunz, Helmut Scholz |
### FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

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